

March 15, 2002

Environmental Contamination at Fort Funston No Significant Impacts on Human Health

Study Shows Evidence of Lead and PAH's

Results of recent screenings for human health concerns following the discovery of spent ammunition, skeet and lead shot at Fort Funston have shown evidence of localized lead and Polynuclear Aromatic Hydrocarbon (PAH) ground contamination. The distribution of lead and PAH's is not widespread, but there may be hotspots undiscovered. Adverse health impacts to human or canine visitors are not expected. This applies to short or long term exposure.

The contamination may be associated with the former rifle, skeet and pistol range used by the U.S. Army and the City of San Francisco. While there is some oral tradition that a portion of Fort Funston had been used by the U.S. Army for a pistol range and by the San Francisco Transit Police for a revolver range, NPS was not aware, until recently, of any possible hazardous substance remaining as a result of those uses.

Background

In early November 2001, while performing archaeological compliance in support of a natural resource project being done by the National Park Service and the U.S. Geological Survey, Biological Resources Division, NPS discovered contamination in locations covering 6 acres within a closed area at Fort Funston. NPS employees found spent ammunition, skeet and lead shot in and around a 12-acre closure. NPS did further visual investigation and found limited isolated bullet casings off designated trails in and out of closed areas.

NPS subsequently coordinated efforts with the appropriate regulatory agencies. A private firm, Harding ESE, was contracted to take ground samples to determine what materials are present and whether there is a health hazard to the public and to wildlife. The samples were tested for the presence of lead, PAH's and other contaminants that may be associated with firing ranges.

In early March 2002, park management advised park employees and volunteers that results of the preliminary screenings for human health concerns showed no expected adverse impacts to human and canine visitors.

What's Next

The next step will be a preliminary ecological risk assessment to determine whether restoration activities can continue before further investigation and site remediation is done by the Army.

What You Can Do

Visitors to Fort Funston who discover spent ammunition or skeet are asked to leave it in place, mark it so it is visible and notify park personnel by calling the Park Communications Center: (415) 561-5656. If there are questions regarding contamination within the closed areas, please call (415) 561-4732 or (415) 561-4730.

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